

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND CHALLENGES OF EFFECTIVE QUALITY ASSURANCE MONITORING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE.

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Abstract

Philosophy of Education is concerned with critical examination of ideas, issues, Programmes and problems in education. Quality assurance monitoring is one of the ways to critically examine school activities to maintain standard in all aspects of school system. Federal government of Nigeria through the National Policy on Education (2013) made quality a guiding principle in her educational planning. Secondary education is the middle stream in the education cadre which prepares students in Nigeria for higher education. Hence, quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools is designed for the achievement of set goals and objectives. This study examined the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State in the light of philosophy of education. Three research questions were formulated to guide the researchers in conducting the study. The population of this study consisted of 263 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample size of this study was all the 263 public secondary school principals in Anambra State due to relatively small size of the population. Data were collected with researchers developed questionnaire titled “Challenges of Effective Quality Assurance Monitoring” (CEQAM). Mean ratings were used to answer the research questions. The study found out that the major challenge facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State is the problem of funding. Based on the findings, it is recommended among other things that government at all levels should provide the required resources for effective quality assurance monitoring in Nigerian schools.

Keywords: Philosophy of education, quality assurance, secondary schools.

Introduction

Philosophy of education is concerned with the study of the purpose, nature, processes and ideals of education. According to Onebunne (2018) philosophy of education deals with the guidelines, policies and ideas that are used to monitor the ways schools should be managed. Quality assurance monitoring in schools is one of those policies Federal Government of Nigeria formulated to set, maintain and improve standards in all aspects of the school system (National Policy on Education, 2013). Quality assurance monitoring in schools is a measure adopted in education sector to ensure the achievement of set goals and objectives. Federal Government of Nigeria made quality a guiding principle in her educational planning (NPE, 2013). This government effort to ensure qualitative education in our educational system gave birth to quality assurance monitoring in schools.

The Universal Basic Education Commission (2020) elaborately stated that quality assurance allows the system to attain beyond the minimum standard in input, process and output that would lead to producing a Nigerian child that will be useful in the society. It goes beyond quality control thus laying emphasis on the quality of the end products with the presumption that minimum standard exists. It is simply all about ensuring quality in our inputs, processes and outputs through supervision, inspection, monitoring and evaluation. It has the primary purpose of regularly evaluating adherence to national quality standard. It also involves, the contribution of internal and external evaluators to ensure improved teaching and learning processes. Indeed, quality assurance monitoring in schools is a paradigm shift from the traditional practice of school inspection to a holistic approach. This is to ensure that inputs, processes and outputs of the education system meet set standards to bring about improvement in education delivery, boost teachers’ performance, learners’ achievement, parents’ and other stakeholders’ participation (Ogbodo, 2012).

Quality assurance monitoring in schools is the system review of educational programmes to ensure that acceptable standards of education are maintained. In the context of education, Ajayi and Akindutire (2007) posited that quality assurance in the education system implies the ability of the schools to meet the expectations of the users of manpower in relation to quality of skills acquired by their outputs. According to Omebe (2018) quality assurance in education has become an all – embracing activity that includes all policies, processes and actions through which the quality of education provided is developed and maintained. Furthermore, Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007) argued that quality assurance in schools is related to the accountability, both of which are concerned with maximizing effectiveness and efficiency of educational systems and services in relation to their contexts, missions and stated objectives.

Ehindero (2004) posited that quality assurance in schools focuses on:

- Learning entry behaviours, characteristics and attributes including some demographic factors that can inhibit or facilitate their learning;
- The teacher entry qualification, values, pedagogic skills, professional preparedness, subject background, philosophical orientation;
- The teaching-learning process including the structure of the curriculum and learning environment;
- The outcomes, which are defined for different levels in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes including appropriate and relevant instruments to assess these objectives.

Quality assurance in schools therefore is said to be the ability of the schools to meet certain criteria relating to academic matters, staff-students’ ratio, staff mix by ranks, staff development, physical facilities, adequate library facilities, adequacy of various inputs in the schools in terms of quality.

The vision of national quality assurance monitoring in schools is to ensure provision of high quality education for every child through collaboration with other stakeholders. Its mission is to support the improvement of quality education provision and outcomes for people in schools. Its aim is to have uniform standard in all schools of the federation. Areas to be monitored in quality assurance are:

- i. Outcomes of teaching and learning process.
- ii. Quality of education programmes provided.
- iii. The impact of leadership and management on teaching and learning process (Ogbodo, 2012).

Indices are very important in quality assurance monitoring in schools. The quality assurance indices provide bases for the monitoring in schools. Ogbodo (2012) maintained that inputs in the educational industry determine the quality output of the system. The interplay of inputs, contents, process determines the outcome of any educational programme. The quality assurance indices therefore include:

- i. **Quality of Input Resources:** The input resources available to educational system include the human resources such as the teachers, students and other supportive staff, the physical facilities that is the infrastructure, building, laboratory equipment, furniture, books and research journals. It includes also the financial resources that is funds available to carry-out projects in the school.
- ii. **Quality of Content:** Quality of the educational curriculum determines to a large extent the quality of education available and offered by an educational system. The curriculum embraces all the activities and experiences that contribute to the development of the learners in their academic career.
- iii. **Quality of Process:** The educational process includes teaching – learning methods, research activities, the school leadership/administration and community services. The teaching – learning process implies the student – teacher interaction. This will be dependent on the

teaching methods and pedagogical skills employed by the teacher in the teaching-learning process.

- iv. **Quality of Output:** Educational output refers to measures of achievement, attainment and standards. Achievement refers to what learners really learnt in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired. Attainment refers to the number of learners who completed the prescribed academic programmes and obtain the qualifications. Standards are the official learning objectives, that is, what society expects of products of a given school system. Output measure include academic achievement on tests, scores, progression and pass rates, thus, the internal and external efficiency.

Secondary education in Nigeria is the middle stream in the education cadre which prepares students for higher education. It is a strategic transitional stage of educational pursuit of every Nigerian student. Hence, quality as the benchmark and maintenance of set standard in all aspects of secondary education cannot be compromised. On the basis of this background, the current study sought to examine the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State in the light of philosophy of education.

Statement of the Problem

Philosophy of education critically examines the process and problems of educational practices. Achieving effective quality assurance monitoring in schools has become one of the most difficult task in Nigerian education system. The difficulties in achieving effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools to some scholars like Anyaogu (2016) and Ogbodo (2012) is responsible for falling standard of education in secondary schools. Inadequate funding, poor teachers' commitment and lack of enabling environment are also problems associated with the difficulties. These problems have continued to affect negatively students' academic performance in secondary schools in Anambra State in the light of philosophy of education imperative. Hence, the need to examine the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State in the light of philosophy of education is the problem of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State in the light of philosophy of education. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. The components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. The challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. How to tackle the challenges for better result.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What are the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. How do we tackle the challenges for better result?

Method

The descriptive survey research design was used for this study. Mba & Udegbe (2012) described descriptive research design as a type of research in which a group of people or item is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or item considered to be representative sample of the entire group. This design was ideal for use in this study, because the study collected data from

263 public secondary school principals in Anambra State with a view to examine the challenges of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State in the light of philosophy of education.

The population of this study consisted of 263 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample size of this study was all the 263 public secondary school principals in Anambra State due to relatively small size of the population. Data were collected with researchers-developed questionnaire titled “Challenges of Effective Quality Assurance Monitoring” (CEQAM). The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Part one was the introductory part and contained statements that sought information on the respondents’ status. Part two comprised 15 items that were organized under 3 sections namely the components of quality assurance monitoring, the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring and strategies to tackle the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring. The respondents were requested to indicate their opinions on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). Three experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka validated the instrument.

For reliability, split-half test was used. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of 0.76, 0.78 and 0.80 were obtained for the reliability of the three sections of the instrument. For data analysis, the three research questions were answered using mean ratings. Based on a 4-point rating scale, the decision rule that any mean score from 2.50 and above was taken as agreed, while any mean score below 2.50 was taken as disagreed.

Results

Research Question One: What are the components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean rating of respondents on the components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary school in Anambra State.

N – 263 Public Secondary school principals in Anambra State

S/N	Items on the Components of Quality Assurance Monitoring	School Principals x (mean)	Decision
1	In quality assurance monitoring, internal and external evaluation are involved.	4.00	Strongly Agree
2	All learners are involved in the process of quality assurance evaluation.	3.88	Strongly Agree
3	Quality assurance evaluation is carried out openly with those being evaluated.	3.20	Agree
4	Quality assurance evaluators use the same standards known to all stakeholders.	3.30	Agree
5	School improvement is the target of quality assurance monitoring.	3.90	Strongly Agree

Results in table 1 showed that all the items have mean ratings above the cut-off point of 2.50. The table also showed that statements in item 1, 2, and 5 were responded positively in strong agreement. Statements in items 3 and 4 were responded positively in agreement. Hence, all the respondents agreed that statements in items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are the components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean rating of respondents on the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.

N – 263 Public Secondary school principals in Anambra State

S/N	Items on the Challenges Facing Effective Quality Assurance Monitoring	x (mean)	Decision
6	Problem of funding is one of the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring.	4.00	Strongly Agree
7	Lack of trained quality assurance evaluators is another challenge facing effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.90	Strongly Agree
8	The use of old teaching methods poses a challenge to effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.88	Strongly Agree
9	Poor instructional materials is a challenge facing effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.40	Agree
10	Poor physical facilities is also a challenge facing effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.20	Agree

Results in table 2 revealed that all the items have mean ratings above the cut-off point of 2.50. The table also revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with statements on items 6, 7, and 8 while agreed with the statements on items 9 and 10. Hence, they agreed that statements on items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question Three: How do we tackle the challenges for better result?**Table 3:** Mean rating of respondents on how do we tackle the challenges for better result.

N – 263 Public Secondary school principals in Anambra State

S/N	Items on strategies to tackle the challenges for better result.	x (mean)	Decision
11	Required resources should be provided to ensure effective quality assurance monitoring.	4.00	Strongly Agree
12	Quality assurance evaluators should be trained to ensure effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.90	Strongly Agree
13	Appropriate teaching methods should be adopted to ensure effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.80	Strongly Agree
14	Adequate instructional materials should be provided to ensure effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.40	Agree
15	Adequate physical facilities should be provided to ensure effective quality assurance monitoring.	3.30	Agree

In the results shown in Table 3, all the items have mean rating above 2.50 indicating that strategies stated in the items should be used to tackle the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State for better result.

Discussion

According to the responses of research question one, 263 school principals in Anambra State agreed on the components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State as in

quality assurance, monitoring, internal and external are involved, all learners are involved in the process of quality assurance evaluation, quality assurance evaluation is carried out openly with those being evaluated, quality assurance evaluators use the same standards known to all stakeholders, school improvement is target of quality assurance monitoring. This finding was in agreement with the quality assurance monitoring models discovered by Universal Basic Education Commission (2020) as school self-evaluation and external evaluation, learners' participation, transparent evaluation, one standards scale and school improvement. Thus, these quality assurance monitoring models were in line with the components of quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.

In research question two, school principals in Anambra State agreed on the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State as problem of funding, lack of trained quality assurance evaluators, the use of old teaching methods, poor instructional materials and poor physical facilities. This finding suggested that in order to achieve effectiveness in quality assurance monitoring in schools, the challenges facing effective quality assurance monitoring must be analyzed and their implications revealed. This is in line with the study of Ajayi & Adegbesan (2007) and Omebe (2018) which discovered that analysis of quality assurance monitoring and its challenges paves way for educational development. Hence, it is through this analysis that solutions are offered to the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State.

The responses to research question three revealed that school principals in Anambra State agreed on the strategies for tackling the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State as provision of required resources, training of quality assurance evaluators, adoption of appropriate teaching methods, provision of adequate instructional materials and physical facilities. This finding should be implemented because education is the bedrock of national development and sustainable economic growth. In the words of Ogbuagu (2021) education is a process of social reformation and transformation. Any nation that wishes to rise above the ambit of poverty must regard the education of citizenry as a priority. Hence, highest premium should be placed on the challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in all levels of education for sustainable national development and economic growth.

Conclusion

The findings of this study call for serious actions from the government at all levels and stakeholders in education industry. Effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools enhances school improvement. The potency of school is more evident in its positive output imbued with instrumental values of nurturing productive citizens for sustainable development. There are challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State. Unless the strategies for tackling the challenges are adopted and implemented, effectiveness in quality assurance monitoring in secondary schools in Anambra State may not be achieved. Therefore, government at all levels in Nigeria should adopt and implement the above-mentioned strategies for tackling challenges of effective quality assurance monitoring in Nigerian schools as philosophers of education see them as ideals for education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government at all levels should provide the required resources for effective quality assurance monitoring in Nigerian schools.
2. Quality assurance evaluators should be trained to ensure effective quality assurance monitoring in Nigerian schools.

3. Regular quality assurance monitoring in Nigerian schools should be encouraged to maintain set standard in all aspects of the schools system.

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